

Introduction to Dance

Dance and creative movement can make a significant contribution to the school curriculum. Dance in all forms—ballet, modern dance, tap, jazz dance, ballroom, country western, ceremonial, improvisation, folk or current social dancing—has always been a part of society. Movement and dance are still ever-present in our life today—on the stage and television, on videos and magazine ads, at school and social settings. It is an important part of the education process for learners to experience the potential that dance holds for self-expression, creativity, communication and healthy social enjoyment. Dance provides learners ways to create, express, and connect ideas and feelings to themselves and to the world. Dance is a lifelong learning experience.

Learners need opportunities to develop their potential for understanding, communicating and expressing themselves. Dance offers learners numerous experiences to explore and express their own creativity and the creativity of others. Through movement, learners can communicate meaning and express ideas in new and innovative ways. Additionally, dance instruction enhances imaginative problem solving and advanced-thinking skills.

The art of dance also offers learners ways to make connections to history, to other societies and to world cultures. The study of other cultures through dance allows learners to make direct connections to their own experiences. While dance is generally pursued on a technical level, it also offers numerous opportunities for links to other fields of study.

Dance as a lifelong learning experience provides physical health benefits and enjoyment far into the future. The teaching of dance paves an avenue for the development of cooperative and social involvement, physical coordination and self-discipline and specific dance skills for future enjoyment. In addition, learners enjoy the carry-over skills of dance as they engage in other movement activities.

In summary, learners need opportunities to develop their potential for understanding, communicating, and expressing themselves with meaning and creativity through movement and dance. At the same time, these opportunities should give them a better understanding of themselves and others. By providing these opportunities, dance contributes to the affective creative side of education and must be assured a significant place in the school curriculum.

Inquiry into Dance

Dance	PERCEIVING	INTERPRETING	EVALUATING	CONNECTING
TECHNICAL APPROACH	What are the movement elements and skills in dance? A5	How do we create and communicate through dance? A6	What level of technique was achieved? A7	How do dance and healthful living relate? A8
CREATIVE APPROACH	What are the principles, processes, and structures used in movement studies and choreography? A9	What is being communicated? A10	Were the goals achieved? A11	What connections can I make to dance? A12
CULTURAL/HISTORICAL APPROACH	How can dance be demonstrated in various cultures and time periods? A13	How can dance in various cultures and time periods be understood? A14	Why is this experience significant? A15	What connections can be made to other times, places and cultures? A16
CRITICAL APPROACH	How are form and style used in dance? A17	How am I reacting to this and why? A18	How might this experience be evaluated? A19	What connections can be made between dance and other fields of study? A20
AESTHETIC APPROACH	What aesthetic responses are evoked by dance? A21	How does dance convey meaning? A22	What is my response? A23	How does dance enrich my life? A24